

FORUM

Internal Party Journal of the S.P.G.B.

No. 11

AUGUST 1953

SIXPENCE

THE SOCIALIST IDEA

In the June issue a distinction was made (not for the first time) between Socialism as a system of society—Socialism(1)—and Socialism as a body of theory—Socialism(2).

Let us now go on to consider a third use of the word Socialism, and call it Socialism(3). This is what is sometime covered under the terms "The Socialist Attitude", or "Socialist Understanding", or "The Socialist Idea". A thorough analysis of these terms, and the way they are used, reveals that the most adequate way of looking at Socialism(3) is to call it an attitude. We shall define an attitude (following ordinary textbook usage) as "an enduring organisation of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of the individual's world". We can say at once that Socialism(3) is a rather special kind of attitude, because it usually covers more than one aspect of the individual's world. The attitude of party members not only covers the political field, but also extends to the religious field, for example.

Having made that clear, we should then note that an attitude is not only cognitive—it does not only consist of knowledge of facts. It also includes motivation—it makes those who have it want to do something, to take some action. It includes emotion—it leads to feelings of liking for some people, institutions, actions, etc., and distaste for others. And it includes perception—it makes one see some things very clearly, and ignore others completely, and interpret events one way rather than another. From our own experience, each one of us knows that all these things are true of Socialism(3), especially under its title of "Socialist understanding".

* * *

And it is equally obvious that this is what is meant by the "Socialist idea". This, again, is an attitude. When we say of a new member "He's got the idea; now it's only a matter of filling in the details", we should rather say "He's got the attitude; now it's only a matter of getting the facts and arguments to back it up". And it should be thoroughly understood that this is the only thing that the Socialist Idea *can* be. It can't be Socialism(1), because everybody's idea of this is different; in fact, even the same person's ideas about it change

over the years. If the Socialist Idea is common to all Socialists (and this is the usual meaning of such a term) we can easily see that it can't be Socialism(1), which is different for all Socialists. And it can't be Socialism(2), which again is different for all Socialists. Probably no two people would agree what to include and what to exclude from this mass of material. And in fact the amount of it which is valid actually changes with time; also new material is added. It must, then, be Socialism(3). This is an attitude which can be common to all Socialists.

It is the attitude which enabled Marx to write "Capital" and Engels to write "Ludwig Feuerbach". It is the attitude which enables our own comrades to write in the S.S. every month—often about things never mentioned before in the traditional body of Socialist theory. It's the attitude of mind which enables party members to see the world's events through Socialist eyes, penetrating beneath the tinsel and the glitter to the hard economic realities lying beneath. It's the attitude which enables comrades to add to the theory of Socialism and continually to recreate it for the current age.

And this is the attitude which the majority of the world's inhabitants have got to adopt before we can have Socialism—that is, Socialism(1). They have got to get the Socialist attitude. This is the underlying meaning behind the phrase which is bandied about so unthinkingly about understanding and wanting Socialism. When you've got Socialism(3) you

want to understand Socialism(2) and you want to attain Socialism(1)—and you want to get of all that stands in the way as soon as possible.

* * *

But, of course, this isn't as easy as handing somebody the Socialist Idea like a brick—"Somebody gave it to me: I can give it to somebody else"—it means long, hard work for many years to come. It means that the idea of fighting elections now is, as Comrade Evans has well said, "a piece of sympathetic magic". It means that things are not now ripe for Socialism(1). It means that we won't have Socialism(1) until attitudes have changed institutions and institutions have changed institutions, etc., etc., to the point where only one more change of attitude is necessary for the institutions of Socialism to take over from the institutions of Capitalism. At that point it will still be necessary for us, as it has always been, to point out that Socialism(1) is there for the taking. *Only this time it will be true.* And because it is true, and can be clearly seen to be true, people will believe us; and because they act on their beliefs and find their actions successful, their attitudes will change; and because their attitudes have changed, they will co-operate to set up new institutions. And because of this speech, this belief, this action, these attitudes and these institutions, we shall have Socialism.

J. C. ROWAN.

APPEAL TO BRANCHES

FORUM must not run at a loss. Its present size will have to be reduced unless circulation is maintained. We appeal to all branches (particularly those who have reduced their orders) to increase orders and sales by at least 10%.

THIS MATTER IS URGENT

FORUM

Correspondence and articles should be sent to FORUM, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High St., London, S.W.4. Subscriptions 12 months, 7/6d, 6 months 3/9d. Cheques and P.O.'s should be made payable to:- E. Lake, S.P.G.B.

EDITORIAL

There is a false, but apparently widely-held belief that a small circle of contributors writes most of the articles in FORUM. That certain members contribute regularly has perhaps overshadowed the fact that new writers have come forward and are continuing to do so. The 76 items published in the first ten issue (to July) were written by 38 different members, and 6 groups, branches and committees wrote 8 further items.

There are no grounds then for the assertion that FORUM is monopolised by a small group of writers. Members who have never previously written for the Party are moved to send in contributions on questions in which they are particularly interested. And it is doubtless an advantage to the Party that the opportunity to gain experience in the exacting business of crystallising ideas into the written word is widened by FORUM. Many are gaining this experience, and, we are certain, others will make the effort to become contributors in the future. There are some who say, "Yes, I thought of writing something about that, but . . ."

It is our concern, as editors of FORUM, which exists for members and is written by members of all the companion parties, to assist in removing the last "but" and all that comes after it. True, it may take time to produce an article or even a short letter worth reading, yet if you have something that you feel *ought to be said*, then you are already more than half way towards the production of an item for FORUM. Concentration and effort will do the rest, and when it is done you will have gained by the experience and derive great satisfaction from it. There are perhaps more potential writers in the Party than is apparent.

Sometimes the doleful opinion is expressed that as the first enthusiasms of some of the earlier issues abate the usefulness of FORUM must decline. We do not hold this view. On the contrary, we believe FORUM can have a much wider usefulness than has so far been evident. Much more can be done to widen

our understanding of Socialism. There are some members who have not yet written for FORUM who have something worthwhile to write about, who will, we are sure, produce useful, critical writing. Others who are planning are doing research in particular subjects. It is unfortunately true that the main difficulty these comrades labour under is that they are already committed to other Party work. It is not a new experience in the Party to discover what little time one has only when an extra task is attempted. A task some comrades have on hand is to review some of the Socialist classics in the light of modern criticism and development.

With patience and hard work we are certain that the future of FORUM is assured.

CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITORS

Comrades,

In an article entitled "People of the World—Unite" (April FORUM), the viewpoint was expressed that the establishment of Socialism was in the interest of all mankind, irrespective of class. The writer analysed the consequences of this on a number of socialist arguments, and then went on to suggest amendments to the D. of P. to bring it into line with his analysis.

Quite rightly he did not argue, in an opportunist fashion, that this analysis should be considered because it would make socialist propaganda more appealing to most people. However, this position that he advocates does have important practical propaganda implications. One that leaps to mind is that if The Socialist Party is not opposed to the capitalist class, it should not be opposed to advertisements in The Socialist Standard, as long as they are not of an anti-socialist type. In this way, the S.S. would cost the party less, and so ease our financial position.

To those who ask "What sort of advertisements?" I would suggest books, radiograms, notepaper, cigarettes, chocolates, notices of political organisations, etc. Some may suggest that the firms concerned would not be interested, but to them I would say that as a journal like "History To-day" can get plenty of advertisements, it seems likely that we have a chance.

This is not a reason for rejecting, or accepting the views put forward in the article by S.R.P. They must be accepted or rejected on their merits. This is merely a logical step that we might advantageously take if such views are held by a majority of the membership. Even if such views are held, nothing short of a party poll on this specific issue should be made before any action is taken.

Yours fraternally,

ROBERT.

THE S.P. OF IRELAND

Comrade Harry Berry, Kingston Branch, took advantage of his annual holiday to visit our comrades of the Socialist Party of Ireland.

A representative of the S.P.I. welcomed Comrade Berry at the Air Terminal and from then on every moment of his short stay in Dublin was made pleasant instructive, and interesting. Comrade Berry was considerably impressed by the enthusiasm of the Irish comrades and their magnificent efforts to spread our message and make Socialist ideas better known in Ireland. And make them known they certainly appear to succeed in doing. Their resourcefulness in finding means to provoke discussion around Socialist principles in public, displays skill as well as zeal. By comparison with England, the conditions in Ireland are semi-fuedal and present enormous difficulties for the Socialist propagandist. Outdoor meetings are difficult and sometimes impossible, and there is no doubt that the means pursued by the Dublin comrades are, in the circumstances, effective. On all possible public occasions, they appear to group together, and exude studied friendliness the better to provoke discussion on Socialist principle. Politically, the S.P.I. is succeeding in making a mark in Ireland which is creditable for its size.

Comrade Berry derived great pleasure from his all-too-short stay. The contrasts between industrial England and Ireland, where the peasantry and the influence of the Catholic Church permeate the political and social life of the people, present an interesting social study.

Irish comrades derive much stimulation and gratification from such visits, and if British comrades are interested in paying a visit, the Secretary of the Kingston Branch can provide the name and address of a lady sympathiser who can offer limited but pleasant accommodation in a new Dublin suburb. Please, therefore, write to the Secretary of the Kingston Branch if interested.

Arising out of this visit, the Kingston Branch has started a fund to assist the S.P.I. to send fraternal delegates to our Annual Conference next year. The financial position of the S.P.I. reflects the low standard of living and the considerable unemployment which prevails in Ireland at the present time. The thoughtfulness of the members of the Kingston Branch in their efforts to give fraternal encouragement to our Irish comrades deserves widespread support.

SOCIALISM WILL BENEFIT ALL

Recently I submitted an article for the S.S. which explained that Socialism will be in the interest of all mankind. To my astonishment I was told that some members would disagree with this view, and that since it was controversial it could not appear in the S.S. I must, therefore, present the propositions in the article as if they need to be proved to members, and not (as I thought) as if they were the views of the Party.

My starting point is Socialism, as defined in the Party's object. There can only be common ownership provided that people's ideas are in line with it. Our critics will not let us depart from this standpoint even if, for some reason, we wish to do so. They say, for example: "But suppose everyone wants to do one job and no one will do another". We reply that such a situation will not arise or alternatively, that if that is the case then we cannot have Socialism. Whichever way we answer, we imply that Socialism pre-supposes an attitude of social-mindedness in the people who are to participate in it, as opposed to one of individual- or group-mindedness.

Since all will stand equal to the means of production and all will draw upon the products of labour according to their needs, it follows that all must permit others to stand equal and to draw freely. In fact, it is misleading even to use the word 'permit', because it implies that permission could, under certain circumstances, be refused. Let us grant that a section of society may not be persuaded that Socialism is in its interest, and may object to it on those grounds. What are the rest of the people to do about that? They can either admit that the basis of the objection is correct, i.e., that Socialism does, in fact, only operate in the interest of most, not of all, people (which will encourage the minority to go on thinking as they do)—or they can *prove the basis of the objection false* by a fuller application of the socialist idea.

Those who have been educated for the community will take an interest in all the problems that affect humanity and will adjust their standpoint and their behaviour to its welfare. Their life in the community will always be marked by goodwill and a feeling of oneness with the rest of society—not with 90% or 99.9% of it, but with *all* of it. Now, I am not saying that Socialism depends upon everyone having perfectly developed social

feeling, nor am I denying that people will ever have disagreements or personal dislikes. The point is that Socialism, by very definition, cannot make *social* provision for treating some people differently from others—it cannot meet an anti-social act on the part of an individual by an anti-individual act on the part of society.

* * *

Now we approach the question of whether people benefit or not. If it is true that a section of society (the ex-capitalists) will not benefit, then that means they have something to lose. Comrade Hayden put it like this (April FORUM): "... it is true that those who are now the employing class would gain something in the new society. But they stand to lose something in the process, luxury resulting from property and their exploiting of the workers."

My dictionary defines luxury as "gratification of the senses, desirable thing that can be done without." Of course, Socialism will not be without luxury in those senses. What it will be without is the sort of luxury that is associated by contrast with poverty and is, in fact, its complement. Will the absence of this sort of luxury be looked upon as a loss? If it were possible for the present enjoyers of luxury to be transferred (with their capitalist ideas) to live in socialist society, it is quite possible that they would deny they had benefited. But what will they think if they absorb the ideas that will be all around them under Socialism (in concretised as well as theoretical form)—if, in short, they accept Socialism as most people to-day accept Capitalism?

We must be very careful when we speak of what people will gain and lose with Socialism. Let us not delude ourselves that it is only capitalists who can see no advantage in it. We often state that 90% own 10% and 10% own 90%, as though it were a magical formula that automatically makes the 90% turn a deaf ear, while occasionally one of the 10% resolves to get rid of the system.

The fallacy of trying to compare one individual's life under Capitalism with how people will live under Socialism should be apparent. There is no valid yardstick which can measure respective "standards of living". What is the equivalent of free access in terms of hard cash? Can you compare the luxury of a millionaire who has ulcers with someone

in socialist society without millions or ulcers?

We can say this about how people compare Socialism with the present. Those who glimpse an understanding (for that is all we can do) of what it means in terms of a way of living, are conscious of a tremendous loss in not having it. On the other hand, those who do not accept the possibility of social change, and who therefore do not work for it, consequently regard any assessment of gain or loss as idle speculation. It is not what they think they will personally gain or lose by it that determines their attitude to Socialism, but that they think it is something outside the range of practical life.

* * *

To deal now with a few points that arise in opposition. Why do Hayden and other comrades assert that even at the eleventh hour a majority of capitalists will not support Socialism? I readily concede that if our propaganda is to be based *only* on the need for expropriation and the use of such language as "a vote to strike fear into the hearts of our exploiters" (*Socialism*, p.50), then Hayden could be right—this won't make capitalists into socialists. But then I don't believe it makes workers into socialists either! It seems to me a peculiar "eleventh hour" that prepares to usher in classless society on such a bellicose note.

In my view the Party's literature (and in particular our older pamphlets) does not adequately explain what we mean by Socialism. In some cases it positively conspires at error. Thus in *Socialism* (p.13) we find the following under the sub-heading "The Possibility of Leisure": "The human intelligence which accomplishes this (ending of poverty and drudgery), since it can only do it by dislodging the rich from their position of idle luxury and privilege, must necessarily come from the working class". It will be noticed that 'human intelligence' excludes 'the rich', who are to be dislodged. The logical deduction is then made that the dislodging must then be done by the working class. But it is the major premise that is at fault. Socialism is not the triumph of the non-rich over the rich—it is the triumph of equality over both. The passage quoted is merely the *complement* and not the *opposite* of the reformist view: "The human intelligence which ends poverty, since it can

only do so by dislodging the poor from their present position, must necessarily come from the ruling class".

Then on p.36 there appears this statement about the expropriated owners of wealth: "There would be nothing left for them but to work for their living like the rest." This odd choice of language implies a *reduction* in status for the ex-capitalist instead of a *change* in status for all people. The writer of this pamphlet obviously did not have such a clear grasp of socialist principles as Marx, who spoke of work under Socialism as not merely a means to live, but as itself the primary necessity of life. All men, in short, will live to work, not work "for their living".

The following paragraphs are the conclusion to my article submitted for the S.S., and sum up the arguments that I think can usefully be

placed before non-socialists.

"... the sort of life we envisage will be possible under Socialism is not tinged with envy of, or retribution against, capitalists. It has no greater connection with how the rich live now than with how the poor do—it seeks a standard superior to both."

Capitalists are no more the special creatures of Capitalism than are workers. The one class cannot exist apart from the other. Quite apart from the uselessness of holding one class responsible for the social consequences of class struggle, there is a positive danger of doing so. If the proposed improvement in the conditions of the mass of people is to be based *only* on making the few disgorge what they possess, then it is merely a capitalist revolution, such as in Russia in 1917. The void left by such an

"expropriation of the ruling class" can only be filled by another ruling class. Until workers are socialists, they will continue to carry exploiters on their backs and fail to see that everyone can walk upright.

Socialists advocate classless society because it provides the opportunity for the fuller development of all human personalities. Freed from class antagonisms, men can co-operate freely with each other to benefit society (and themselves as part of it). Those who support Capitalism are not only the ones who seek to hold what they have, but also the ones who seek to have what someone else holds—both groups accept the rights of property. The only way to end social antagonisms is to establish social harmony, which is what Socialism means."

S.R.P.

A POSITIVE CASE

When discussing our ideas with non-Socialists (either with friends or as propagandists from the platform) we are often accused of being merely destructive and iconoclastic. We condemn capitalism for causing wars, giving rise to unemployment and slumps, and perpetuating poverty, malnutrition and hunger, and we say that it must be abolished. "But what is your alternative?" we are asked. "Socialism", we reply.

Yet when attempting to define Socialism, many of us still tend to be too negative. I am not suggesting that we should prophesy, I do not know whether we will travel by horse, bicycle, automobile, helicopter or jet-plane, or all the lot, or some other form of transportation not yet developed; or whether there will be mass production, or if we will live in blocks of flats or chalets; and neither does any other comrade.

But many speakers on the outdoor platform reel off, almost in parrot fashion: "Socialism does not exist in the Soviet Union; Nationalisation is not Socialism; under Socialism there will be no state, no government, no money, no armies, navies or air forces, no coppers," etc. Correct as these statements are, the approach is not only too negative, but has an adverse effect on those members of the audience who do not know our case.

Although we cannot give a detailed blueprint of Socialism, we can present our point of view in a more positive form. Some speakers do, but many do not.

It is the aim of this article to suggest means of propagating Socialism from a positive, not

negative, point of view—without being too controversial.

WHAT WILL SOCIALISM BE LIKE?

With the establishment of Socialism, the means of living—the factories, mines, etc.—will be the common property of all mankind regardless of race or sex; and production and distribution will be democratically administered by all the people.

With the abolition of capitalism, and with it the wages system, things will be produced solely for use. This will mean that a means of exchange—money—will no longer be necessary. Barter, either in simple or complex form, will disappear. Because, with production for use, people will have access to what they need, each determining his or her own needs (needs and wants being synonymous), all will give to society according to their varying abilities.

Socialism will be based not on coercion but co-operation. In the words of Marx: "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all." (Communist Manifesto.) Society will not be divided, as in the past, into master and slave, ruler and ruled, governor and governed, but will be a classless world, where governments of people—or rather over people—will be replaced by a democratic administration of things.

THE STATE

As I mentioned earlier, the state and its coercive forces are often dealt with in a nega-

tive way. When told by speakers that there will be no state machine, no army, navy, air or police forces, many members of the audience are amused. So conditioned are they to our capitalist way of life that they react in this manner. Therefore, although it may be more difficult and take a little longer, it is imperative that speakers briefly—but not too briefly—trace the history of the state and its coercive forces. It could be presented somewhat as follows:—

The state has not, as many people think, existed in all human society. It rose with the beginning of property society, from the need to keep class antagonisms in check. Many thousands of years ago, before the advent of civilisation, the state did not exist.

Mankind as homo sapiens—true man—has existed for probably half a million years, most of the time in savagery and barbarism. The earliest form of society, which existed throughout savagery and continued into barbarism, we call Primitive Communism, because, in the words of Kropotkin: "Within the tribe everything is shared in common; every morsel of food is divided among all present . . . In short, within the tribe the rule 'each for all' is supreme, so long as the separate family has not yet broken up the tribal unity." (Mutual Aid). During this long period there was no state.

The state is a bureaucratic and coercive apparatus, necessary in a society divided into property owners and non-owners, and designed to keep an oppressed, property-less class in subjection. It will be unnecessary

in a classless socialist society. After the seizure of the means of production by the majority of mankind—the working class—and the conversion of these means of production into common property, the working class puts an end to itself as a class. It puts an end to class society altogether, with its class differences, hatreds and struggles.

A socialist society will have no need for a state. Unlike Anarchists, socialists do not advocate the abolition of the state; this would result in chaos. What socialists do advocate is the abolition of a system of society that gives rise to, and necessitates the use of, this coercive instrument. It is

not abolished or overthrown. It just becomes superfluous and withers away.

* * *

Although it is impossible here to deal with all the aspects of Socialism, it can be seen that the society we all desire and are working for can be presented in a much more positive manner than is done by many members at present. Such aspects as marriage, morals and the like, can be dealt with from a historical and positive point of view from our platforms. This may be more difficult in front of an audience than just saying there will be no this, no that and no the other thing, but it must be done.

It will always be necessary for us to analyse capitalism and to discuss its varying problems for humanity. But I think most people these days are more concerned with what the world could be like, rather than to hear our speakers attack the Labour, Conservative or Communist Parties.

I hope the above suggestions will stimulate comrades to discuss the POSITIVE case for presenting socialism; particularly those who are wary of "crystal-ball gazing", and who are loath to mention future socialist society at all, but just continue attacking capitalism and capitalist-reform parties.

PETER E. NEWELL.

THE NATURE OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

5 — The Social Superstructure (contd.)

Before beginning his analysis of the commodity as the 'cell-unit' of capitalism, Marx warned us in the preface that the analysis must turn upon minutiae and that the force of abstraction must replace the apparatus of the laboratory. This difficulty in economics is magnified in general sociology which deals, not with solid wealth, but with airy institutions, and where there is no comparable cell unit, no "20 yards linen or one coat", to eke out abstraction, where description is beggared and metaphor must be worked to death.

For unity of social forms and processes is not sufficiently expressed when we describe institutions as being geared together, because geared to the labour which is what society is for, or when we describe them as interdependent like the organs of the body. These analogies fall short, for the institutions of a society are each the whole, turned to catch the mind's light this way or that.

Likewise the elements, which are conceived as making up the separately distinguished institutions, have an indivisibility of existence and therefore of development). "Democracy is quite sensibly regarded as a thing of "franchise", "checks and balances", supremacy of legislature", "independence of judiciary", "rule of law", "presumption of innocence", "right of appeal", "freedom of association", Habeas Corpus and Hyde Park, these being the things thrown into relief when we look at a society from a particular angle. But held another way, they become "consideration", "contract", "guarantee", "inheritance", "purchase", "affidavit", "ruling", "entail-

ment", "reversion", which belong to "Property". And each of the particles which make up these parts—"keep out", "dial O", "week 3"—is a microcosm carrying the genes and chromosomes of the society which bodies it forth, and each particle is a part of every part, for the institutional molecules is no molecule but society writ small enough for thinking. They, too, have no local habitation: it is the mind that sunders and rejoins and names Law or Property.

PERMUTATION OF ARTIFACTS

Social evolutions is the continuous accumulation of artifacts, of means and products. Quality is the outcome of quantity, because each social molecule is "permuted" with every other, and each particle a function of every other, that is, of society as a whole, for society is not the sum of its parts but the permutation of them. The character of property is related directly to the size of the productive forces; democracy is affected directly by the mass of statutory can'ts and musts to which everybody is subject, and the mass of legislation which Parliaments cannot cope with themselves; the quality of law changes with the emergence of additional law-making and judgment-giving bodies outside Parliament and the Courts; social assistance, as a result of the former trickle of haphazard rescue work having become a regulated river, differs as cheese to chalk from the brutal stigmatised charity which affected only the few only occasionally. There is a world of difference (as 'fundamental' as that between Feudalism and Merchant Capitalism, or between that and industrial

capitalism) between the intensely personal powers of a Pitt or a Grenville to determine policies and appointments and the comparatively mechanical character of Government to-day.

There is a world of difference between those who ran the East India Company for the Whig and Tory intrigues and to-day's permanent departmental secretaries, where civil head or titled nob may alike be dismissed or unfrocked for an illicit pound of sausages or a currency offence. There is a world of difference between Tolpuddle and the regional joint advisory council penny an hour rotary shift Mowbray scale P54 what no tea break all out boys.

But there is a world of difference only if the parts are added together. Although the qualitative difference in each case given is directly related to a change in quantity, and the regularisation which quantity imposes, each changes also by virtue of changes in the others. And a particular change has no social significance if obsession with our hardly-learned 'separate categories' allows us to think that "other things remain the same", for the mind is then not keyed to sift out a common motion from the social molecular variations of it, as a uniform current in a unitary field of force. The progressive depersonalising of property, the increasing vicariousness of power, the widening delegation of responsibility, the translation of the State from primarily coercive to predominantly administrative—none of these is really credible until it is seen that each is the other, that it is society which becomes more impersonal, under the weight of human

artifacts, as the productive instruments, and their cognate property, power and politics, become more and more beyond personal appropriation and control.

The various 'institutions' appear to have a life and life and locus of their own, distinguishable like the branches of a tree. There is an obvious sense in which education is not industry and Church is not State. But it is not enough to recognise that the branches have a common stem and are nourished by a common sap; nor it is enough to add that the branches grow into one another to form a solid mass. The analogy is more fundamentally faulty in that it ascribes to social phenomena a spatial quality, locus, which they do not have. It is only men, and the things men make and enjoy, which have these physical qualities of space and place: the institution (and the sum of institutions—society) has no locus, although it is associated functionally with men and their artifacts, as thought is associated functionally with the spatial brain. We go astray, therefore, even when we call society a "structure". Society, rather, is the artifact thinking.

SOCIAL GROWTH

The difference between a wasp's thoughts and ours is based on the difference between ten thousand and two billion brain cells (or on the permutations of these two numbers). The issue is a difference of quality because it is the whole brain which thinks. Social evolution issues from the daily and hourly accumulation of artifacts, permuted each with all. The defect in our materialism is that our concept of society is not sufficiently social—we don't "perm" enough—and is therefore not sufficiently determinist, that is, it is not determinist at all. The creation of history in the "daily and hourly fulfilment" of human needs remains too much a fine Marxian phrase and not enough a recognition that social growth takes place spontaneously at the molecular level, unhonoured and unseen, each added molecule the addition of a thousand permutations. But it is only by the bucketful that social change becomes perceptible to the gross human eye, retrospectively (and this encourages the notion that men can change society by the bucketful).

Health, Welfare, and Children's services, for instance, are bundles of molecules which by accretion become in relation to each other first complementary, then supplementary, then supernumerary, become ripe for the great statesmanship which unites them in a single Min. of Soc. Serv. and stamps "Le Roi le Veult" on the social fact. Or again, the various kinds of taxation (income tax, rates, national insurance, W.D. contributions) on the one hand, and on the other hand the various kinds of positive allowances (family allowances, pensions, health benefits) and negative allowances (personal, earned income, expenses, house

maintenance) must sooner or later be unified. Their unification—and their extension to other "free" services (transport, power, etc.)—are perhaps only a matter of another war, and have social and ideological implications far beyond the mere saving of administrative man-hours.

Again, the general levelling up and down of standards of living, the taming of the jungle of primitive "incentives", is tilting the problem of production to another angle: what makes people willing to work well without the destitution stick at one end or the 'higher standard' carrot at the other? At the same time, the more deliberate adjustment of education to industrial and social needs (Act 1944, comprehensive schools, Youth Employment Bureaux) places more emphasis on finding out what a child's leanings are and on giving him a better idea of what different jobs involve before his schooling finishes. At the same time also, the higher organic composition of capital—the new phase of "cybernetics" which takes the toil and dirt out of work (and replaces it by boredom)—prepares the ground for the practical dovetailing of schooling with employment. These things again have implications beyond the partial and fumbling answers to immediate problems of incentives or vocational grading to get the best of people notwithstanding equality of poverty. Briefly, capital's necessary concern with quantity of output generates problems which lead to concern with attitude towards work, which in turn lead to concern with the quality (enjoyment) of work—which is the kernel of the socialist outlook, and the mainspring of socialist society.

CONCEPT OF REVOLUTION

The view that the idea is the agent of social change is no departure from our materialism, it inheres in the materialism we inherited from Marx, and has recently become more vociferous and more blatant only because it is being challenged. If Hegel has been much misunderstood, so has Marx. The former has more to say about the material conditioning of ideas is commonly acknowledged, and the latter, having thrown idealism out of the window, fetched it back by the door by dedicating his materialism to political service (in a society where property, power and politics were much smaller and more personal than they are to-day): our materialism remains still suborned to the idealism of a single, sudden, separate political act.

This concept of the revolution, and the concepts that material conditions are ripe for socialism, that (short of this revolutionary act) no significant social change takes place, that the "socialist idea" is complete, and that this idea is now the agent of social development—these concepts are mutually dependent and logically consistent. And it is a logical step from the idea as the agent of social change to

the concept of the idea as independent of time and place (and which therefore permits us to scorn the "mechanical" laws of history and economics) to claim that the "socialist idea", suitably expressed, is meaningful to anyone in any part of the world, or that "society in the Middle Ages once came within an ace of establishing socialism". These claims are not renegade departures from the Party outlook, but extensions of it, grown bolder by the boldness of the Party's own criticism of its own position.

This criticism is made by different members from different angles. It is made by Canter, who dares to suggest that our certainty on a point of political detail may be unnecessarily dogmatic; by Turner who (perceiving that the social character of the revolution transcends its class origin) dares the challenge the possibility of violence; by Lake who dares to doubt the ripeness of the socialist movement for political participation; by McClatchie who insists that anti-capitalism is not enough; by Trotman, consistently determinist, who sees the revolutionary act as a mirage because he sees the revolution as an historically necessary process.

This summary does not pretend to exhaust the currents of controversy, much less to do justice to those named or unnamed, but it serves to show that we all have a foot in each other's camps (there is no "line-up", no cleavage), and that our controversies all converge on the nature of the revolution. But while it is the concept of revolution which is under cross-examination, it is the concept of history which is on trial. It is the Socialist movement (substantially, the Party), developing its materialist outlook, on the shoulders of the dialectical form in which Marx re-wrote Hegel's dualism, and because this is a change on the *philosophical* level, it signifies social change for a fundamental nature.

"Idealism" and "materialism" stand out ideally as opposites, but materialism evolves. Historical materialism was neither begun nor ended by Marx, and from Rousseau to ourselves there has been continuous development of the revolutionary formula which is the business end of the materialism. The more integrative hypotheses which in the past half-century have developed in the physical and biological sciences (concurrently with the actual social integrations which are capital expanding) have developed also in the social science. The mind is less in tune with the old descriptive classifications, the old divisions and separations and discontinuities, in a society in which everything is more anonymous and more "total"—the total war of a world in which an Eden discovers that "peace is indivisible" and a Vishinsky that "war is indivisible" just too late to observe that peace and war are indistinguishable; the total State which merges political and economic functions; the total poverty of gas-mask and insurance card which

dissolves distinction of status and prestige.

The old certitudes of an expanding colonial economy (the concepts of progress and perfectibility engendered by the progressive emancipation of women, the unskilled, and the destitute) cannot survive the absolute uncertainty of to-morrow week. Religious fervour cannot outlast the passing of squirearchical capital, nor political fervour the lack of meaningful issue and distinguishable programme, and both kinds of messianic message are equally suspect. Within the Party there appears a lack of en-

thusiasm for the platform, for the "Standard" and for classes, countered by shots of electrical benzedrine to revive the militant ecstasies of a phase which culminated in June 1904; but this indifference is not simply a reaction to the "political doldrums" outside the Party, for back of it lies an unease not wholly canalised or conscious, feeling its way towards a further development of the revolutionary attitude. The single, simultaneous, universal act of revolution is a product of a society which no longer exists.

Most of the criticism so far offered in these articles of the concept of revolution has been negative. We still want to know what alternative there may be, what else the revolutionary might do than we do now. Before my own approach to this re-statement can be set down, in summing up, one other matter must be touched on—what is called "the problem of communicating" socialist ideas.

F. EVANS

NOTES ON FUEL AND POWER SOURCES

(continued)

Wind and water power were the prime movers in the early years of capitalist society. To-day, hydro-electric power is still important, for it provides roughly a third of the electric power used in the U.S.A. to-day. This power is derived from sunshine, the energy radiated from the sun to the earth, which is immense. Thus, although the electric power used in the U.S.A. each year is about 120,000,000,000 kilowatt hours, during that time slightly more solar energy than that falls on every square mile of that country. Here is a virtually inexhaustible supply of energy, the only problem is how to harness it. We will now consider a number of methods that have been suggested and tried out experimentally, and in this way we shall learn the limitations of this source of power for both a capitalist and a socialist society.

The sunshine could be used directly to light lamps, drive machines and heat homes. Experiments have been made in a number of countries to utilise it directly in these ways. For example, in Israel, where sunshine is abundant for nine months of the year, a simple device, which may be installed on the roof of a normal dwelling house, is being developed to use the sunbeams to charge up an electric battery, and so provide home lighting for the nights. While *Science Digest*, February 1950, reports that in Dover (Mass. U.S.A.) a solar-heated house was completed in 1948 and that experiments carried out in February 1949 indicated that nearly a half (41% to be exact) of the solar radiation was collected, and used to heat the house. In the summer the processes may be reversed and the "night cooling" stored and then used to cool the house in the daytime. The advantages of such a method of home heating are the low temperatures of operation, which precludes the fire hazards of present-day central heating

(this is important in the U.S.A. for meteorological reasons), no troublesome smoke or ashes, and the small running costs, once the units have been installed.

Because the tropics receive more heat from the sun than the regions nearer to the poles, air currents are set up. These constitute the weather. Windmills are an old and obvious way of utilising the energy of these currents. In recent years, research has been carried out in a number of countries on windmills as sources of electrical power. In France, for example, plants developing up to 40 kilowatts have been built, and in Denmark in 1944, 88 wind-driven generators produced 3 million kilowatt-hours of electric power (roughly 1/40,000 of the electric power used in the U.S.A.), while in the early years of electric lighting, small windmills were installed on housetops, in isolated regions, to provide light. These small generators worked well, but when cables were laid to these regions from the power stations, the firms refused to supply power to any houses that continued to use this cheap form of lighting. Such is the scope capitalism offers to the inventive!

* * *

ATMOSPHERIC POWER

Hydro-electric power is derived from solar energy. Heat from the sun evaporates water from the surface of land and sea, and this later falls as rain, snow and sleet, etc., which flows back to the sea, and the process is repeated. In the last stage of this hydrological cycle we tap the energy by using a water wheel, and so

obtain the hydro-electric power. The Niagara Power Stations is a powerful example.

Just as in the temperate zones of the middle latitudes (in which most of Europe and the U.S.A. are situated) "cold waves" of air come from the arctic regions, so "warm waves" of air from these regions flow into the arctic region. In these situations the air is markedly warmer than the snow or sea surface. This phenomena could also be utilised to generate electric power, for in *Science Digest* (April 1950) it is reported that a plant in Abidjan (Africa) has been built to generate electric power, using the temperature difference that exists between the surface waters of a tropical lagoon (at temperature 82°F) and the waters at a depth of 16,000 feet, 3 miles offshore (at temperature 46°F). A steel and rubber pipe is used to carry the deep ocean water to the power plant onshore. By-products of this power station supplying 7,000 kws. (roughly 1/10,000 of that used in the U.S.A.) will be tens of thousands of fishes caught in the water intake each year, and plenty of table salt.

A fundamental feature of these sources of energy is that, like the weather, they are seasonal and irregular. Drought dries up rivers, calms stop windmill blades turning, and clouds cut off the sunshine. A striking example of the fickle nature of these phenomena was provided recently by the Lynmouth disaster of last August (1952), while every year appreciable damage is done and people killed by tornadoes, hurricanes, and floods in the U.S.A. However, in some places, certain of these phenomena are fairly regular. Thus, the sun shines fairly steadily for nine months of the year in Israel, a windmill on Ben Nevis will experience few calms, and Niagara Falls have not yet been known to dry up. Also, in recent years, we have seen the first systematic attempt

to control these weather processes. As yet, only very crude small scale experiments have been done, using lumps of 'dryice', silver iodine smokes, and fine sprays of water, but some successes have been recorded, and, according to a correspondent writing in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society in 1951, some farmers in the U.S.A. find these crude methods of producing rain artificially are profitable.

The irregularities of these sources of atmospheric power could be smoothed out by using a power storehouse, which would collect the energy when it was abundant, store it, and pass it on to machines, etc., when it was required. In principle, this is what coal and oil have done to the sunshine of past ages. As yet, only small power storage plants, like those used in motor cars have been built. Another approach to the problem is to transmit the power from areas of favourable weather to those less favoured regions of calms and overcast. This would necessitate transmission, in emergencies, over distances of 1,000 miles, while present power lines are only suitable for distances up to 300 miles. However, future power transmission may be by powerful rays, like radar beams, and in that way the problem of long distance transmission may be solved.

TRANSMISSION

As such power with long distance transmission would be very vulnerable in time of war, it is unlikely that capitalist society would ever rely on such methods. Small powerful power packs will always be needed, so mineral sources of power will only be replaced by small storage batteries, in this society. Socialism, with its premium on unpleasant, unsightly and tedious tasks, will probably develop these power plants drawing on solar energy. Small plants will be adequate to provide the needs of the socialist craftsmen, and with no markets to grab, or rivals to beat, the irregularities of weather will merely provide variety. It goes without saying that 24 hours per day production will no longer be considered—work may be done when the opportunity arises.

Another interesting source of power tapped in recent years is that of volcanoes, and hot springs, or geysers, that derive their power from the hot inner core of the earth. In Larderello (Italy) bore holes have been sunk over an area of 45 square miles and steam is ejected at high pressure by the volcano. This steam is used to produce 1,000 million kilowatt hours of electric power each year (roughly 1/100 of the electric power used in the U.S.A.). Tides, which are caused by the

gravitational pull of the Moon, may also be a source of power in the future. Animal power will not only provide a useful reserve source of power, which needs feeding and tending in the daylight hours, but will also provide a useful manure, not the odious refuse that present-day machines produce. Also the body heat of animals can be used for central heating. Recently it has been reported that in Sweden the body heat of cows, while in the cowshed, has been used to heat nearby houses. It becomes obvious that once the fetters of capitalist society are removed, there is really no knowing what neat devices will be developed in this and other fields.

This brings us to the obvious conclusion that socialist society will never depend for its existence, as does the capitalist one, on men risking and wasting their lives in underground prisons. Perhaps, in the near future, even the capitalist society, with its need for 'Atom Bomb Fodder' will soon end such a waste of human beings, but even it will only bring in its place another waste! But such is the inevitability of capitalism. Socialism merely offers people a pleasant, full and happy life, performing useful, interesting work in enjoyable surroundings.

ROBERT.



BIOSOPHY

Biosophy is a new term which I have coined to mean the science or art of living well (as distinct from managing to survive) in an environment which appears to be against one's health and happiness, and which threatens to exterminate the human race. It is the art of making oneself adaptable, of living in harmony with nature and evolution instead of against it.

Biosophy studies habits and social conditions which control mankind completely. It is far more than Nature Cure, which in effect is the curing of illness by natural methods, although it embraces the Nature Cure way of life from the dietetic and health aspect. Biosophy realises that there are other factors such as economic conditions, political, religious, and psychological, to be taken into consideration. Nature Cure has no direction on these points, nor has Socialism any direction on health. Where Natureopaths do proffer views on social and economic problems, they are the usual half-baked ideas which have been exploded a century ago. So, too, it is when Socialists offer views on health matters in the main,

although some are enlightened. Those who, with childlike ignorance, proclaim that economics has nothing to do with health had better knock their heads against those who say, if only we had socialism there would be no health problems.

Why does the baker bake bread, we ask those who support Nature Cure without any ideas of economics. We know that the profit motive governs all production, including food production. Why does the socialist eat white bread and fall for all the diabolical contradictory advertising that capitalists put out to sell their worthless foods? A change from capitalism to socialism is essential if we expect to have pure natural foods, unadulterated, unrefined, unbleached or coloured, and not preserved with harmful chemicals. But if the majority of the workers under socialism wanted white bread bleached with agene, and sweets in all the colours of the rainbow, and their "sausage and trash", etc., the food sophistication ideas of capitalism might well be carried on, to the detriment of those who are health conscious.

Biosophy can only be developed into a science by those who seek to apply it, and learn from their surrounding how best to stand up to the welter of adverse circumstances. How to be healthy when all around you is diseased; how to be happy when surrounded by misery, gloom and pessimism; how to suffer fools gladly without being all things to all men, and so be able to retain individuality and independence of thought until we can get socialism and put the basis right. In fact, how to be sane and remain sane in a world fast going insane!

The very soil we grow our food in is being systematically poisoned with artificial chemical fertilisers. Our food is being treated with all manner of harmful chemicals to enhance its sale value. Our bodies, full of disease which all this brings about, are being more and more subjected to injections of harmful toxins and rills of the National Health (so-called) Service. No wonder "Man is born crying, lives complaining, and dies disappointed". Biosophy seeks to put right not only the social system, but also health by understanding.

H. JARVIS.